

Edward Livingston to Andrew Jackson, November 21, 1814, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

New Orleans, November 21, 1814.

Sir, We just learn by a vessel from Pensacola that you have occupied that important point. there is an undivided wish among the Americans here that you may retain possession of it during the War. every principle of self Defence requires this measure and there is none in the laws of Nations which forbid it. either from weakness [or] hostility the Spaniards have permitted it to become an English port where expeditions were prepared to invade us and where their fleets and armies found a secure refuge. Pensacola well garrisoned, their Depot at Apalachicola Destroyed, the English must be deserted by their Savage Allies, and the first Steps of their threatened invasion will be rendered so difficult as to Embarrass all their future Operations.

Will you allow me Sir to call your attention to the subject mentioned by the Committee of Defence, of the proper points for fortification on the several approaches to this City. very little reliance can be placed upon State Execution. the Legislature have appointed a committee of defence but I am greatly mistaken if anything Efficient be done, unless by your agency. Should some one be authorised specially by you to Confer with them it might have a good Effect. With attention and some expence we are invulnerable—without it the strength of our Country is useless and we are an Easy prey to the first invader. our Defence will be chiefly Militia and Militia never fight so well as behind entrenchments.

Should an Engineer be wanted either for works at Pensacola or those to be erected here, permit me to recommend Mr. Lacarriere Latour. 1 he is regularly educated to that business in the best schools of France and is

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1 Maj. A. Lacarrière Latour became Jackson's chief engineer for the New Orleans campaign, for which his *Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana* (Philadelphia, 1816) is invaluable.

a man of perfect honor and integrity and speaks both french and English fluently. Should you want a man of this Description the Character I give of him will be confirmed by every man of respectability in the place.

I have the honor to be with great respect Sir Your Mo. Obdt. Servt.